

## BOOK REVIEW

GEOFF WILLIAMS AND PAUL ADAM. 2010. **The Flowering of Australia's Rainforests: A Plant and Pollination Miscellany.** (ISBN: 9780643097612, hbk). CSIRO PUBLISHING, P.O. Box 1139, Collingwood, Victoria 3066, AUSTRALIA. (**Orders:** www.publish.csiro.au (Australia), www.styluspub.com (U.S.A. & Canada), www.eurospanbookstore.com (U.K., Europe, Middle East, & North Africa)). AU \$99.95, US \$93.00, 216 pp., 8" × 10 1/2".

A word of caution before continuing: this is obviously a beautiful book, with attractive cover, excellent photographs, and appealing content and information. Be very alert to the second sentence in the Preface: "But readers will find that from time to time we have taken a *circuitous path that too easily voyages to the shores of other lands, that finds interest in plants that do not belong solely or even tenuously to the rainforest environment, that we are inclined to revisit matters that are worth retelling from different perspectives, and that small portions of related knowledge are given an airing in diverse quarters.*" (Italics mine.)

If you are planning to use the excellent and diverse information given, be sure to keep a notebook and pen or pencil close at hand. Note page numbers and subject content for key information. You will find related comments and data scattered throughout the volume. It will save you much time and frustration if you have recorded locations of previous discussions of the same or related topics and can find them easily. Comparisons are not only helpful but occasionally unexpected.

After the explanatory Introduction, the first chapter, "Flowers and pollination in lore and legend" was a bit unexpected but very informative. A nice addition, to be sure. The second chapter, "Categorising rainforest plants," is self-explanatory. Immediately following are 34 color photographs, beautifully providing an overview of plants and habitations.

Chapters 3 through 9 are quite diverse in subject content. They cover a variety of helpful (and sometimes unexpected) topics. For example, Chapter 4 is entitled "Being a flower"—a relatively lengthy chapter; Chapter 5, "Introduction to breeding systems;" Chapter 6, "Spatial and temporal structure of rainforest: general mechanisms that influence pollination and reproductive ecology;" Chapter 7, "Australian vegetation history and its influence on plant-pollinator relationships;" Chapter 8, "Pollination and the Australian flora;" and Chapter 9, "Pollination syndromes: who brings the 'flower children' in rainforest?" The titles definitely catch one's attention, and each chapter obviously has been carefully researched, evaluated, and presented in specific detail.

Eight appendices and the bibliography complete the volume. Appendix 1, "Pollination ecology of Australian subtropical rainforests: implications for the conservation of remnant communities," echoes and confirms a definite concern for the fragmented parts of the Australian rainforests. Before the European settlements the Australian rainforest covered about 8 million hectares; now only about 2 million hectares exist, mostly along the eastern coast, with 54% in Queensland. Furthermore, on the eastern coastal fringe, existing communities are in "disjunct remnants threatened by invasion of exotic weeds and animals and by human impacts."

Obviously, this is a matter of growing and great concern, not only for Australia but of nearly worldwide awareness.—Helen Jeude, Volunteer & Assistant Editor, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.